



## POLICY

**Title:** Hazing

### Policy Statement

Hazing is strictly prohibited at the University of Vermont.

Hazing means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with joining, pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or gaining or maintaining membership in any group, organization, department or unit that is a part of or recognized by the University, and that is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, socially or physically isolating, humiliating, intimidating, or demeaning the student(s) or otherwise endangering their mental or physical health. Hazing also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in such acts, and occurs regardless of the consent or willingness of a person to participate in the activity.

Hazing does not include any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, extracurricular, or military training program goals, provided that (1) the goals are approved by the University employee with oversight responsibility for the organization, such as the organization's advisor or a team's head coach, or the Office of the Provost; and (2) the activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the University, and typical and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.

Information that any member of the University community, a University recognized group or organization, varsity athletics team, or a departmental student affinity or advisory group has allegedly violated this policy will be referred to the appropriate process for investigation and resolution:

- Individual students will be referred through the student conduct process for an alleged violation of this policy.
- Recognized Student Organizations will be referred through the procedures outlined in the Student Organization Misconduct Operating Procedure.
- Varsity athletics teams will be referred to the Director of Athletics for an alleged violation of this policy.
- Departmental student affinity and advisory groups will be referred to the applicable Dean/VP and the Provost for an alleged violation of this policy.
- Faculty and staff will be referred to the appropriate review process in compliance with University policy or applicable collective bargaining agreement for any alleged violation of this policy.

The length of time between an incident and making a disclosure will not affect the willingness of the University to investigate the allegations or to provide support and other services. However, a prompt disclosure may significantly impact the ability of the University to conduct a full investigation.

This policy is intended to be consistent with State law; it will be reviewed periodically and revised in light of legal developments.

## Reason for the Policy

Membership in University recognized groups and organizations, varsity athletics, and other departmental student affinity or advisory groups can increase leadership and service potential; provide athletic, recreational, intellectual, and spiritual opportunities; and otherwise contribute positively to personal, professional, and social development. When membership is linked with involvement in hazing activities, the purpose of the endeavor is compromised and can endanger the health and safety of students or other university community members. Hazing is therefore strictly prohibited at the University of Vermont.

## Applicability of the Policy

This policy applies to all members of the University community and their guests, regardless of whether the behavior occurs on or off campus, as well as to all University recognized groups and organizations, and varsity athletic teams.

## Definitions

*Hazing:* see Policy Statement above.

*Recognized Group or Organization:* As defined in the University's Group and Organization Recognition Policy.

## Procedures

### **Understanding the Scope of Hazing Activities**

A broad range of behaviors may be considered hazing. The range of activities cross a continuum from minor to more severe forms of conduct. Severity can be measured both by the level of pressure to engage in the conduct (expecting, encouraging, urging, requiring, coercing, forcing, etc.) and the type of the behavior involved (behavior that is very unlikely to cause physical or psychological harm to behavior that is very risky and almost always will result in some degree of harm). Creating an expectation to participate in activities as a condition of joining, affiliating with, or maintaining membership in a group where harm *could* result is likely to be considered hazing.

### **Reporting Incidents of Hazing**

University employees, as well as contractors, consultants, temporary employees, and volunteers with responsibilities for academic, extracurricular, research, occupational training, or other programs and activities sponsored by or affiliated with the University are required to report possible hazing incidents in a prompt and effective manner to University Police Services, as detailed in the contact information section of this Policy. Students and all other members of the University community are strongly encouraged to report possible hazing incidents as soon as possible to University Police Services.

The Chief of Police Services, or designee, will promptly take steps to investigate and respond to hazing reports consistent with the exercise of reasonable professional discretion, including the notification of responsible University administrators. Separate and apart from any determination by law enforcement as to whether alleged conduct meets the legal standard for hazing, incidents shall also be reviewed to determine whether the provisions of University policy have been violated, as outlined in the section titled "Administrative Response," below.

University Police Services may refer conduct that may constitute a violation of criminal law to appropriate law enforcement officials, subject to the requirements of governing law.

### **Benefits to Those Who Report**

Individuals who are the target of hazing or who have knowledge of a hazing incident, but did not participate, and who truthfully report such activities shall not be individually charged with a violation of this or related conduct policies in relation to the alleged incident..

When reviewing a case, consideration will be given to whether an organization or group has self-reported a hazing behavior and identified individuals who are responsible for the hazing to an appropriate University administrator, as contemplated in the Administrative Response section of this policy, or UVM Police Services.

### **Administrative Response**

The University's response to hazing allegations will occur through the processes outlined in the Code of Student Conduct, the Student Organization Misconduct Operating Procedure, the Student-Athlete Handbook, the Staff Handbook, the Officers' Manual, or the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Upon completion of a thorough investigation, determinations as to whether hazing occurred are made by the appropriate University official, hearing officer, or hearing body with due consideration of the relevant facts and circumstances.

Individual students may also be subject to review of the same conduct for (1) violation of professional standards related to an academic program; (2) conduct standards associated with Athletics; (3) conduct standards associated with recognized student organizations; (4) Housing and Meal Plan Contract Terms and Conditions; (5) eligibility to participate in other University sponsored programs. Similarly, for employees, since hazing may violate the policy(ies) of more than one institutional governing body, the same incident may be referred to more than one hearing body or go through more than one process.

Recognized Groups and Organizations, varsity athletics teams, and locally sponsored bodies may also be subject to suspension or revocation of University privileges or recognition for policy violations or while an investigation is on-going and until such time that the case is resolved.

### **Sanctions**

University hearing officials or bodies responsible for imposing sanctions upon individuals and/or organizations for violation of this policy may consider factors such as the following:

- Nature of the offense, including whether aggravated conduct occurred and whether it is shown that the conduct was premeditated
- Severity of the harm or damage resulting from the offense
- Disciplinary history of the Respondent(s)/organization
- Whether the Respondent(s)/organization sought to threaten or purposefully intimidate a complainant, witnesses, or others involved in the University's disciplinary process
- Whether there was an active attempt to conceal or hide the violation(s)
- Any leadership role or seniority of the Respondent(s) in the organization relative to which hazing occurred, and/or at what level of the organization the hazing behavior was encouraged, endorsed, or otherwise sponsored
- Whether any offense involved behavior directed at a person's actual or perceived membership in a legally protected category as defined in UVM Policy V.7.4.9, [Equal Opportunity in Educational Programs and Activities and Non-Harassment](#).
- Sanctions imposed by other University reviews or hearings
- Whether a risk of continued harm, or threat of harm, to the campus community or individual members exists
- Whether there is convincing evidence that a Respondent was provoked or pressured into the situation, even though the Respondent made a conscious choice to participate

- Whether the organization and/or Respondent(s) have individually or collectively expressed a clear understanding of the severity of the offense, including resulting damage, injury or harm
- Whether the organization and/or Respondent(s) have individually or collectively taken steps to positively address their behavior, or otherwise take responsibility for their actions

Hearing officials or bodies responsible for imposing sanctions will do so exercising reasonable discretion in light of factors such as those just described above.

Examples of sanctions that may be imposed upon individuals are:

- Disciplinary suspension or dismissal, or suspension or termination of employment;
- Attendance at, or creation of, educational programs or other trainings;
- Appropriate reflection activities;
- Monetary Fines;
- Restitution; and/or
- Participation in alcohol, drug, or other counseling services

Examples of sanctions that may be imposed upon organizations that knowingly permit, authorize, or condone hazing are:

- Probation;
- Revocation or suspension of the organization’s existence or recognition;
- Attendance at, or creation of, educational programs or other trainings;
- Appropriate reflection activities;
- Restitution;
- Cancellation of some or all the organization’s activities or events (such as intercollegiate or intramural sports contests); and/or
- Decrease in, or restriction of, the organization’s privileges
- Mandatory restructuring or higher level oversight

## Contacts

<b>Questions concerning the daily operational interpretation of this policy should be directed to the following (in accordance with the policy elaboration and procedures):</b>	
<b>Title(s)/Department(s):</b>	<b>Contact Information:</b>
<b>To Report an Incident of Hazing, Contact UVM Police Services:</b>	
Emergency Reporting	911
Non-Emergency Reporting	(802) 656-3473
Non-Emergency Reporting	<a href="#">Report a Crime</a>
Anonymous Tip Line	<a href="#">Tip411</a> -or- 656-TIPS
<b>If you are concerned about the health or welfare of a student and would like to connect them with support, please fill out a <a href="#">Concerning and/or Risky Event (CARE) Form</a> or contact:</b>	
Dean of Students Office	(802) 656-3380 <a href="mailto:DeanofStudents@uvm.edu">DeanofStudents@uvm.edu</a> Nicholson House
<b>Where behavior may also constitute discrimination or harassment, please contact:</b>	
Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity	(802) 656-3368 <a href="mailto:aaeo@uvm.edu">aaeo@uvm.edu</a> 428 Waterman Building

To seek confidential support if you have been the subject of hazing, please contact:	
Center for Health and Wellbeing (24/7)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counseling and Psychiatry Services (CAPS)</li> <li>Student Health Services</li> </ul>	(802) 656-3340 (802) 656-3350
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	(802) 864-EAPØ (3270) <a href="#">Invest EAP</a>

The University official responsible for oversight of this policy is the Vice Provost for Student Affairs.

## Forms/Flowcharts/Diagrams

None

## Related Documents/Policies

- [Alcohol, Cannabis, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use – Students Policy](#)
- [Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [Designation and Responsibilities of UVM Reporters](#)
- [Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct](#)
- [Group and Organization Recognition Policy](#)
- [Minors; Reporting Abuse or Neglect of and Crimes Procedure](#)
- [Student Organization Misconduct Investigation and Resolution Procedure](#)

## Regulatory References/Citations

- [State of Vermont Hazing Law](#)

## Training/Education

Training will be provided on an as-needed basis as determined by the Approval Authority or the Responsible Official.

## About this Policy

<b>Responsible Official:</b>	Vice Provost for Student Affairs	<b>Approval Authority:</b>	President
<b>Policy Number:</b>	V. 2.19.5	<b>Effective Date:</b>	May 20, 2017
<b>Revision History:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>V. 3.4.7.1 effective September 8, 2003</li> <li>V. 3.4.7.2 effective October 20, 2008</li> <li>V. 2.19.3/V. 3.4.7.3 effective May 18, 2013</li> <li>V. 2.19.4 amended August 25, 2017</li> <li>V. 2.19.5 approved by the President and the Chair of the Board of Trustees June 9, 2021</li> </ul>		

University of Vermont Policies and Operating Procedures are subject to amendment. For the official, approved, and most recent version, please visit UVM's [Institutional Policies Website](#)